

II. Claim Amendments

1. (Currently Amended) A fastener assembly for coupling at least two components of an engine, comprising:

a threaded fastener having a head portion and a shaft portion;

a retention sleeve, having a radially outwardly projecting head flange beneath and in direct contact with said head portion, disposed about the threaded fastener; and

a wave spring disposed about the retention sleeve and in direct contact with an underside of said head flange; ~~wherein the wave spring has an inner diameter slightly larger than an outer diameter of the retention sleeve and wherein the fastener assembly acoustically decouples the components while generally maintaining a seal therebetween,~~ wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve ~~selectively~~ extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a cylinder head ~~the first engine component,~~ and wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve ~~selectively~~ extends ~~at least partially through~~ into an aperture formed in a valve cover located above said cylinder head so that said wave spring is above and in direct contact with said cover ~~the second engine component~~ wherein the wave spring has an inner diameter slightly larger than an outer diameter of the retention sleeve and wherein the fastener assembly acoustically decouples the cylinder head and the valve cover while generally maintaining a seal therebetween.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the head portion of the threaded fastener includes a radially projecting collar.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Original) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the threaded fastener, the retention sleeve, and the wave spring are made of metallic material.

6. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein the wave spring abuts a portion of the retention sleeve such that the wave spring is selectively prevented from being fully compressed.

7. (Currently Amended) A fastening system for coupling at least two components of an engine, comprising:

a fastener having a head portion;

a retention sleeve disposed about at least a portion of the fastener, wherein the retention sleeve includes a flange section located directly below and in direct contact with said head portion and a necking portion that extends downward from the flange section, wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve ~~selectively~~ extends at least partially into an aperture formed in a cylinder head ~~the first engine component~~, and wherein at least a portion of said retention sleeve ~~selectively extends at least partially through into~~ an aperture formed in a valve cover ~~the second engine component~~; and

a wave spring disposed about at least a portion of the retention sleeve; wherein the fastening system acoustically decouples said valve cover and said cylinder head ~~the at least two components~~ while generally maintaining a seal therebetween and wherein said wave spring is directly bounded between said valve cover and said retention sleeve flange section.

8. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 7, wherein the flange section has a circumferential extent that is greater than the necking portion.
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently Amended) The system according to Claim 7, further comprising a plurality of fasteners for coupling said valve cover and said cylinder head ~~the at least two components~~ of the engine.
12. (Previously Presented) The system according to Claim 11, wherein each of said plurality of fasteners is selectively interposed through at least one wave spring.
13. (Withdrawn) A method of reducing the magnitude of vibrations transmitted from a first component to a second component of an automotive engine comprising:
 - coupling the first component and the second component, at least in part, with a fastener;
 - interposing at least a portion of the fastener through a retention sleeve;
 - interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve through a wave spring.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the step of fastening the first component and the second component with a second fastener.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein the second component is a valve cover.
16. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the steps of interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the first engine component, and interposing at least a portion of the retention sleeve, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the second engine component.
17. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, further comprising the steps of interposing at least a portion of the fastener, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the first engine component, and interposing at least a portion of the fastener, at least partially, into an aperture formed in the second engine component.
18. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein the retention sleeve includes a radially projecting head flange.
19. (Previously Presented) The fastener assembly according to Claim 1, wherein a dimension of an inner diameter of the retention sleeve is less than a dimension of an outer diameter of the shaft portion.
20. (Cancelled)
21. (Cancelled)